



## Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds

July 4, 1959 - March 12, 2026

Leslie Earl "Les" Symmonds, 66, of Rankin, Illinois, passed away on March 12, 2026, in Largo, Florida, while vacationing with his beloved wife, Debbie.

He was born on July 4, 1959, in Paxton, Illinois, to Melvin and Lucille (Christensen) Symmonds. Les was baptized and confirmed at Grace Lutheran Church in Rankin, where he remained a lifelong member.

Les married Debbie Eighner on July 19, 1986, at Grace Lutheran Church in Rankin, and she survives.

He is also survived by his son, Nathan Symmonds (Sarah Uden); his daughter, Shelby Symmonds (Bradlee Herman); and his cherished grandchildren, Noah, Maverick, Bryson, Emersyn, Adler and Grayson. He is further survived by his sister, Jan Ruffner of Urbana, Illinois; his brothers- and sisters-in-law, Mike (Leisa) Eighner of Camden, Tennessee; Sherri (Dave) Cox of Paxton, Illinois; Lisa (Brock) Breymeyer of Rankin, Illinois; and Mark (Robin) Eighner of Rankin, Illinois; along with many beloved nieces and nephews: Zach Ellis, Katie (Nate) Grice, Jared (Jess) Eighner, Kelsey Cox (Zach), Kendall (K'Lee) Cox, Ariel Eighner (TJ Clark), Brandy Saunders (Tommy), Dillon Eighner (Nikki), Graham Eighner, Gracie Eighner, Lexie Breymeyer, Lacie Breymeyer, Tate Ruffner, and Bryan Ruffner.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his mother- and father-in-law, Michael and Bonnie (Seidel) Eighner; his beloved son, Michael; and his sister, Sally Symmonds.

Les graduated from Rankin Township High School in 1977. He dedicated many years of service as a correctional officer with the Illinois Department of Corrections in Danville. After retirement, he continued his strong work ethic as a farmhand for Tom Rust and as a building/service worker at Hoopston Area School District.

A devoted member of his community, Les served on the Grace Lutheran Church Council, Rankin Village Board, Rankin Fire Department, and was a charter member of the Rankin Lions Club. He was also a member of the AFSCME Union.

Les was a lifelong, passionate sports fan who faithfully cheered on the Cornjerkers, Illini, Cubs, and Bears. In his heart, he was a true Rankin Ranger. He especially loved coaching youth sports, where he shared his enthusiasm, encouragement, and love of the game with countless young athletes. Some of his greatest joys came from coaching his sons, Nathan and Michael, in Little League, and his daughter, Shelby, in basketball and softball —experiences he treasured deeply. Above all, Les cherished time spent with his family, especially his children and grandchildren, who were a constant source of pride and joy in his life.

Visitation will be held from 3:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. on Sunday, March 22, 2026, at Cox-Knapp Funeral Home in Paxton, Illinois. In honor of Les's lifelong love of sports, those attending are invited to wear casual sports attire. A visitation will be held one hour prior to the funeral service at 11:00 A.M. on Monday, March 23, 2026, at Grace Lutheran Church in Rankin, Illinois, with burial to follow at Rankin Union Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made in Les's memory to Grace Lutheran Church, 102 South Johnson Street, P.O. Box 275, Rankin, Illinois 60960 or Rankin Community Connection, P.O. Box 112, Rankin, Illinois.

# Cemetery Details

## Rankin Union Cemetery

E 4200 N Rd  
Rankin, IL 60960

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR **22**. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Cox-Knapp Funeral Home  
142 W. Patton St.  
Paxton, IL 60957  
(217) 379-2353  
coxknappfh@gmail.com  
<http://coxknapp.com>

## Visitation

MAR **23**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Grace Lutheran Church  
102 S. Johnson St.  
Rankin, IL 60960

## Funeral Service

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MAR **23**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Grace Lutheran Church  
102 S. Johnson St.  
Rankin, IL 60960

# Tribute Wall

MV

“ *My Deepest Sympathy Janet Vogel purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds.*



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**My Deepest Sympathy Janet Vogel** - March 25 at 10:55 PM

BF

“ *Les thanks for being a great friend during our 25 years working together at the danville correctional center. I was very saddened to hear of your passing. We will meet again my friend.*

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**Brad stephenson. froggy** - March 22 at 04:36 PM

VC

“ *Our deepest condolences to you and the family!*

*From Betty Bushue and Valerie Cable*



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**Valerie Cable** - March 21 at 04:52 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds.*



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March 21 at 12:03 PM

JG

“ John and Theresa Grice purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds.



John and Theresa Grice - March 20 at 02:09 PM

CF

“ Coach Fell and family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds.



Coach Fell and family - March 20 at 01:53 PM

CF

“ Coach Fell and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds.

Coach Fell and family - March 20 at 01:53 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds.



March 20 at 10:37 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds.*



March 19 at 03:33 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds.*



March 18 at 03:11 PM



“ *Rhonda Longfellow lit a candle in memory of Leslie "Les" E. Symmonds*



**Rhonda Longfellow** - March 14 at 09:09 PM



*Rest In Peace 🙏*

**Rhonda Longfellow** - March 14 at 09:09 PM

VE

“ So very sorry to hear this. Sending condolences and thoughts and prayers to family and friends.



Vickie Ellis - March 14 at 03:37 PM

SM

My heart breaks for you . Please know that my thoughts and prayers are with all of you



Sandy McCord - March 14 at 05:10 PM

MP

So very sorry to hear this! Prayers Hugs and Love your Families way! My heart breaks for you all. 💔🙏

Mary Perez - March 17 at 05:49 AM



RIP Les! All Condolences from Bud and Pam Brenneman. See you on the other side, brotherman!

Bud Brenneman - March 19 at 11:04 AM

JV

I'm sorry, Debbie your whole family too. There are no words that can help the pain. Just know your family is in my prayers. 💔💙🙏

Janet Vogel - March 25 at 10:16 PM